

was negotiated by the Republican ranking member on the House Homeland Security Committee, the committee of jurisdiction; House Democrats accepted every change requested by the House Republican leadership; and the bill received 35 votes in the House and, likely, a lot more if House leadership didn't flip their position at the last minute.

Despite the pressure of Donald Trump to go along with his Big Lie, 35—35—House Republicans voted to go forward. They are brave, should be commended, and it shows that this truly is a national need, a bipartisan national need.

Another Republican Senator, in worried tones, said the January 6 Commission should be more like the 9/11 Commission and be chaired by outside independent investigators appointed by both parties. Hello. I hate to break it to my Republican colleagues, but the legislation passed by the House is modeled after the 9/11 Commission and, you guessed it, would be chaired by outside independent personnel appointed by both parties. They say they want that in the bill. It is in the bill.

So what is really going on here? Why the various, shifting reasons why Republicans can't support a simple bipartisan, down-the-middle, 50-50 Commission to report on a very serious event in our Nation's history?

Well, it seems the real reason has nothing to do with the structure of the Commission, nothing to do with the details of the bill. It all has to do with politics. According to *POLITICO* this morning, the Republican leader, Senator McCONNELL, told his Members behind closed doors that "regardless of tweaks to the bill . . . approving the Commission could hurt the party's midterm election message."

Again, that is a quote from a report in *POLITICO* magazine or *POLITICO* newsletter—whatever *POLITICO* is. Let me repeat that. According to this report, the Republican leader of the Senate opposes any independent inquiry into the January 6 insurrection because he is worried the truth could hurt the Republicans politically.

Look, I am sorry if an independent Commission to study an attack on our democracy isn't the Republican ad maker's idea of a good time. This is too important—too important.

We cannot let the Big Lie fester. We cannot let faith in our elections continue to erode. We must get at the truth and restore Americans' confidence in this beautiful, noble, ongoing experiment in democracy.

The Senate will vote on the Commission. I hope our Republican colleagues rise to the occasion.

I yield the floor.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### REMEMBERING JOHN WARNER

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I was saddened to learn this morning that our friend and former colleague, Senator John Warner, passed away last night.

By the time I arrived in the Senate, John was already churning a long wake as one of this body's foremost voices on national defense. As a wartime veteran of the Navy and Marine Corps, he was deeply devoted to the men and women who serve in uniform.

As a proud Virginian, John took seriously his Commonwealth's role as host to massive portions of America's military might, including the largest naval base in the world.

As a former Secretary of the Navy, he brought Pentagon clout and technical chops that would help the Senate play a hugely consequential role in defense policy.

John's career was capped, of course, by years as chairman and ranking member of the Armed Services Committee. But John made an even wider impact. My predecessor as chairman of the Rules Committee was a principled patriot across the board.

He was also a truly old-school Virginia gentleman. John knew a thing or two about horseracing, for example, and that is high praise coming from a Kentuckian to a non-Kentuckian.

Members on both sides of the aisle looked to John as a trusted mentor and friend. Our thoughts today are especially with our current colleagues from Virginia. So many Senators, past and present, knew John very well.

Most of all, we are thinking today of his wife Jeanne; his children, Virginia, John, and Mary; and the entire Warner family. The Senate will keep them all in our prayers in the days ahead.

#### BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. McCONNELL. On a completely different matter, today two Senate committees will consider and vote on two very different pieces of legislation.

Over in the Russell Building, the Environment and Public Works Committee just approved a bipartisan bill, led by Chairman CARPER and Ranking Member CAPITO, to invest in better roads and bridges for the American people.

This would be the first major action on surface transportation since the FAST Act 6 years ago. It would raise the baseline funding for roads and bridges to an all-time high. And, as expected, our colleagues just reported this bill out unanimously, 20 to 0. That is legislating done right. Our colleagues are modeling the approach that would let Congress build a successful, big-picture infrastructure bill later this year.

Meanwhile, in the Hart Building, the Finance Committee will spend its afternoon marking up a leftwing, partisan bill written fully within the spirit of the Green New Deal: maximum

pain for working American families in exchange for minimal—minimal—environmental gain.

Under the guise of Clean Energy for America, Chairman WYDEN is leading the charge against the most reliable and affordable ways to power our country.

The legislation he has drafted is full of the sort of policies that would increase the price of gas at the pump, hike the tax burden on independent American producers, of course, killing jobs, discourage the industry-led innovations that have already been reducing emissions without hurting workers, and dragging the United States away from energy independence back toward reliance on imports from places like Russia, Venezuela, and the Middle East.

In exchange, the bill would have ordinary Americans subsidize the lifestyle preferences of wealthy people in places like New York and San Francisco.

So one committee unanimously approved a smart, targeted, bipartisan approach to key infrastructure projects that America needs, and another will consider a partisan descendent of the Green New Deal that would raise taxes, probably raise gas prices, and leave us with a less and less reliable electricity grid.

Really, this contrast is a fork in the road that the Biden administration is facing writ large. Which route to take; a lonely road leading to the far left versus a mainstream, bipartisan road leading straight ahead toward practical policies that make American lives actually better?

The Senate knows how to walk that road. This last highway bill passed the Senate with 83 votes. Just last month, we passed a water infrastructure bill with 89 votes.

If President Biden wants to secure lasting solutions, build a lasting legacy, and improve the lives of Americans in practical ways, he has the map in hand. For the sake of the country, let's hope he and his party decide to follow it.

#### ECONOMY

Mr. McCONNELL. Now, Mr. President, on a related matter, the Democrats' far-left turn thus far has affected the entire U.S. economy, and it is hitting working families right where it hurts.

In January, President Biden inherited safe and effective vaccines. He inherited a reopening economy and a country that was sitting on more pent-up savings than anything economists had seen in living memory. That was the condition of the country when the President took office.

The Democrats have already dreamt up a massive, record-shattering Washington spending spree. Like one House Democrat admitted way back at the start of the pandemic, liberals saw the crisis as "a tremendous opportunity to restructure things to fit our vision."